



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Western District of New York

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PRESS RELEASE

July 14, 2005

RE: UNITED STATES v. VANZELLE CLARK

Acting United States Attorney Kathleen M. Mehlretter announced today the guilty plea of Vanzelle Clark, 37, of Buffalo, New York, to a felony charge of bank robbery in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2113(a). The guilty plea, entered before William M. Skretny, United States District Court Judge, carries a maximum penalty of 20 years imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000.

Assistant U.S. Attorney William J. Gillmeister, who is handling the case, stated that defendant Clark pled guilty to a September 23, 2004, robbery of an HSBC Bank branch located at 1726 Hertel Avenue, Buffalo, New York. Defendant Clark wore a black ski mask pulled over his face and vaulted the teller counter to grab money during the robbery, according to AUSA Gillmeister. Defendant Clark dropped cash inside the bank and along Hertel Avenue as he and an accomplice made their getaway from the robbery, but the two made off with more than \$6,971, AUSA Gillmeister added.

As part of defendant Clark's guilty plea, he also admitted a November 15, 2004, robbery of \$3,874 from a branch of Charter One Bank at 414 Main Street, Buffalo, and a December 10, 2004, bank robbery of \$2,761 from the same branch of HSBC Bank at 1726 Hertel Avenue in Buffalo that the defendant had robbed in September. Each time, he wore a dark mask pulled down over his face and vaulted the teller counter to take money from the bank tellers' drawers, according to AUSA Gillmeister

Sentencing is scheduled for November 7, 2005, at 9:00 a.m., before Honorable William M. Skretny. Advisory sentencing guidelines calculations in defendant Clark's Plea Agreement with the United States Attorney's Office call for a sentence of 77 to 96 months imprisonment for the three bank robberies.

The guilty plea was the culmination of an investigation on the part of the Federal Bureau of Investigation under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Peter Ahearn. Acting U.S. Attorney Mehlretter expressed her thanks to Erie County for assisting the investigation by processing DNA evidence.

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